

## PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENTS AND SITE INSPECTIONS

Included in the scope of the Department's activities are preliminary assessments on old, abandoned industrial sites that have the potential to pose a threat to human health and the environment. As part of the preliminary assessment process, the history of the site is researched together with the identification of industrial processes previously used at the site. Ecological and human populations within fifteen miles of the site are evaluated and all pertinent information is utilized to determine the potential for an adverse impact from any known or suspected contamination. In the event a legitimate threat to human health and the environment exists, a site assessment is performed.

A site assessment is an extension of the preliminary assessment and usually involves the collection and analysis of soil, groundwater, and surface water samples. All samples are collected using in-house personnel and equipment. The samples can be analyzed in the field or taken to the Department's laboratory facilities for more complicated tests. Analytical data obtained from the soil, groundwater, and surface water samples are then utilized to determine the type(s) and the concentration of any contaminant(s) and the type of remediation needed to protect human health and the environment.

The funding for preliminary assessments and site assessments is provided through Superfund Grants the Department receives from the Environmental Protection Agency.



## ALABAMA HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCE CLEANUP FUND

The Alabama Hazardous Substance Cleanup Fund allows the Department to perform timely responses at inactive or abandoned hazardous substance sites, solid waste sites, and agricultural chemical sites that have the potential to impact human health and the environment. These investigations can include the emergency removal of abandoned drums or substances that have been determined to be imminently hazardous.

During these investigations, the Department works to identify the Potentially Responsible Parties (PRPs) to ensure proper removal and cleanup activities are performed to remediate



the site. At sites where a PRP can not be immediately identified, Department personnel make other arrangements and then proceed with cost recovery actions once the PRP is identified.

The Alabama Hazardous Substance Cleanup Fund is supported through a tax on hazardous waste disposal at a permitted commercial hazardous waste landfill in west Alabama. Since the inception of the Alabama Hazardous Substance Cleanup Fund, the Department has addressed almost 300 sites with approximately 250 being restored to the point that no further action is required. The remaining sites have cleanups pending or have monitoring activities ongoing.



## ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

### BROWNFIELDS REDEVELOPMENT Environmental Benefits and Economic Growth

The Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) is currently working with a variety of municipalities, local governments and businesses to assist in the revitalization of old industrial and commercial properties that are not being fully utilized. The successful revitalization of these properties, known as brownfields, is happening across America and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has demonstrated its commitment to brownfields redevelopment programs by allocating grant money and resources for use by state environmental agencies.

Brownfields sites are abandoned, underutilized, or vacant industrial/commercial properties that have either real or perceived environmental problems. Brownfields sites can impede economic vitality because the environmental concerns can prevent prospective business owners from considering the sites for revitalization. Additionally, brownfields sites are often located in areas that are already economically depressed.

However, by utilizing low interest loans and other incentives, brownfields sites can be revitalized and become economically viable business locations providing local jobs in these economically depressed areas. The availability of local jobs can increase the quality of life for residents living in these areas and also can provide environmental benefits by addressing environmental concerns, conserving undeveloped (greenfield) areas, and reducing urban sprawl.

Although the Department is working to encourage brownfields redevelopment, the establishment of a Brownfields Cleanup Revolving Loan Fund (BCRLF) would allow the Department to benefit from federal grant money and maximize the Department's efforts in this area. The EPA recently awarded ADEM a \$1 million grant to capitalize a Brownfields Cleanup Revolving Loan Fund, which would provide low interest loans to identify, remediate and redevelop brownfields sites throughout Alabama. The Department will be supporting passage of the Alabama Land Recycling Finance Authority Act in the current legislative session to provide the Department the necessary authority to implement a BCRLF Program. The information contained in this brochure documents the Department's current brownfields activities and illustrates the benefits Alabama citizens could realize through the implementation of a BCRLF Program.

### BROWNFIELDS PILOT PROGRAM

The federal Brownfields Pilot Program allows EPA to provide brownfields grants directly to municipalities to be used for the assessment and redevelopment of municipal brownfields properties. ADEM currently participates in this



program by coordinating with municipalities and performing environmental assessment activities such as soil and groundwater sampling at brownfields sites. The Department utilizes in-house resources such as the Department's Geoprobe-TM unit to collect and interpret environmental data, which allows the municipalities to obtain the maximum benefit from their grant dollars.



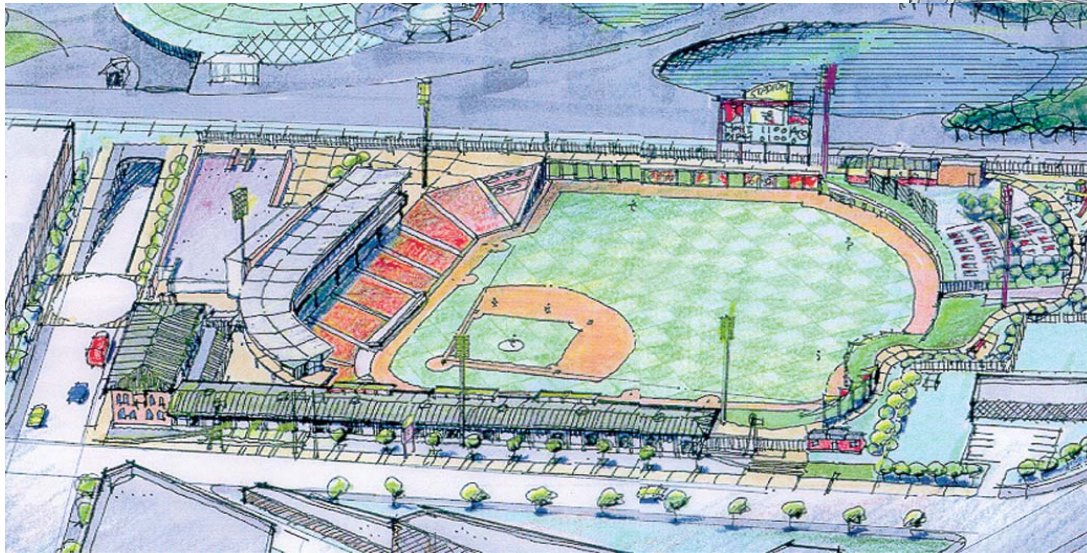
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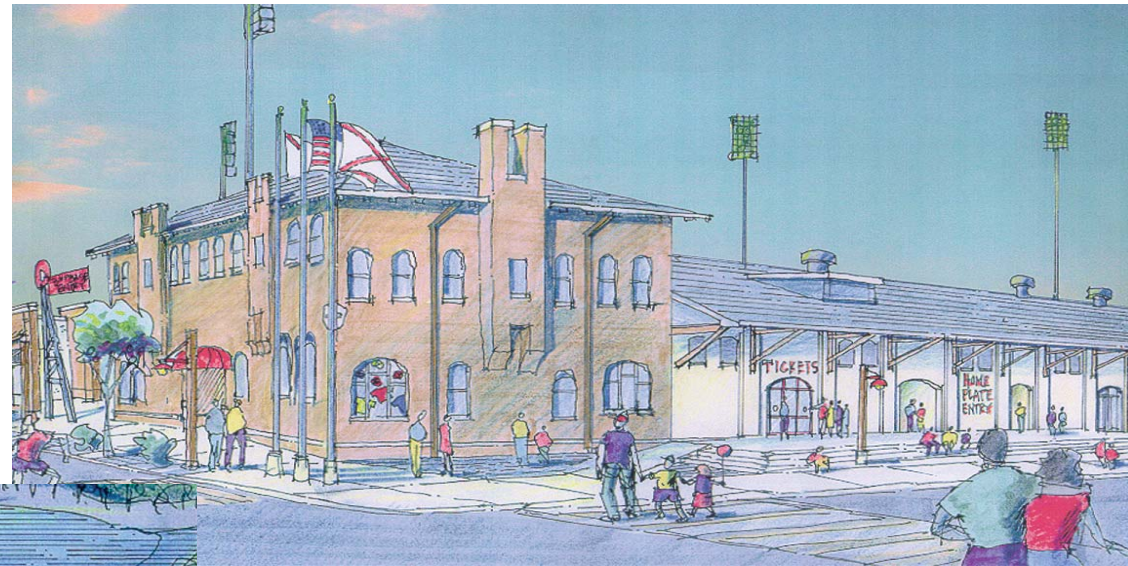


## BROWNFIELDS PILOT PROGRAM (CONT.)

The Department has coordinated with various municipalities throughout Alabama on federal brownfields pilot projects including Birmingham, Prichard, Uniontown, Selma, and Anniston. The Department has also assisted the City of Montgomery with the evaluation of properties in conjunction with its Riverfront Development Project. ADEM staff have partnered with municipalities to perform assessments and evaluate data for 27 projects under the federal Brownfields Pilot Program. These assessment activities are the first steps in returning abandoned brownfields sites to viable business locations.



*Artist Renditions of Montgomery's  
Riverfront Baseball Park  
Scheduled to be Completed in 2004*



## TARGETED BROWNFIELDS ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

The Department is also an active participant in the federal Targeted Brownfields Assessment Program, which provides funding directly to the Department to perform assessment activities at brownfields sites. Although the funding mechanism associated with the Targeted Brownfields Assessment Program differs from the Brownfields Pilot Program, the type of work performed under each program is very similar.

Under this program, the Department utilizes in-house resources to perform soil and groundwater sampling to assist in the assessment and remediation of brownfields sites. Fifteen assessments that have been conducted throughout Alabama provide environmental benefits, maximize the effectiveness of federal grant dollars, and clear the way for the revitalization of brownfields sites.



*This 1844 Building was renovated as part of a Brownfields Project at the Old Tallassee Mill and is currently used as the Tallassee Historical Preservation Society's Welcome Center*

## ALABAMA'S VOLUNTARY CLEANUP AND BROWNFIELDS REDEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The passage of the Alabama Land Recycling and Economic Redevelopment Act (ALRERA) during the 2001 Legislative Session has allowed the Department to effectively implement a Voluntary Cleanup and Redevelopment Program. The program capitalizes on the Department's expertise/experience and promotes the voluntary cleanup and redevelopment of brownfields sites.

Many of these brownfields sites have existing infrastructure, utilities, and buildings that are attractive to potential developers but the possible liability for existing contamination often prevents redevelopment. The Voluntary Cleanup and Redevelopment Program provides liability protection to potential developers who had no association with previous activities that caused the environmental problems.

As part of the program, the property owner agrees to address environmental concerns. For example, contaminated soil can be removed and soil/groundwater sampling used to document cleanup. The site is then ready to be redeveloped and become a viable business location providing local jobs. Potential developers have access to existing buildings and infrastructure but do not have to be concerned with the past environmental problems because of the liability protection provided.



The Department developed the Voluntary Cleanup and Redevelopment Program after reviewing similar programs in other states and consulting with a stakeholders group. Currently, there are 24 companies, with 177 different sites across Alabama, that are participating in this program with many other sites under consideration.

While the Department is very pleased with the results achieved under the voluntary program, establishment of a Brownfields Cleanup Revolving Loan Fund, through the passage of the proposed Alabama Land Recycling Finance Authority Act, would stimulate additional environmental remediation and economic growth by encouraging more participation in brownfields redevelopment.

